

In The Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A milking machine cylinder comprising:

a flexible element; and

at least one sensor element which detects ~~[[at least]]~~ a substantial weight ~~[[relief of]]~~ on the flexible element ~~[[in order]]~~ to trigger a start signal for a milking process.
2. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the sensor element emits a start signal ~~is emitted~~ as the weight ~~[[relief of]]~~ on the flexible element exceeds a predetermined threshold value.
3. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to claim ~~[[1 or]]~~ 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the predetermined threshold value is variable.
4. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~ claims claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the predetermined threshold value is independent of an operating vacuum.
5. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~ claims claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein at least one biasing element is provided.
6. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~ claims claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the predetermined threshold value is influenced by the biasing element.
7. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~ claims claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the flexible element is coupled to a movable element ~~such as a sleeve or a piston~~.

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8. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~
~~claims claim 1, characterized in that wherein~~ the flexible element is configured as a chain
[[or a rope]].
9. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~
~~claims claim 1, characterized in that wherein~~ the flexible element is coupled to the milking
unit.
10. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~
~~claims claim 1, wherein at least one sensor element is selected from a group of sensors~~
~~comprising consisting of:~~ load measuring means, proximity switches, magnetic limiting
switches, dry reed contact switches, expansion measuring strips, magnetic, inductive,
capacitive sensors and resistance sensors and [[the like]] combinations thereof.
11. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~
~~claims claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the sensor element is mounted within the~~
cylinder.
12. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the preceding~~
~~claims claim 1, wherein the sensor element [[works]] is~~ contactless.
13. (Currently Amended) A milking unit cylinder, ~~characterized in that at least one~~
comprising:

 a rapid ventilation is provided that is controlled through a membrane

 which ~~membrane can be brought at least into~~ is movable between an open
position and [[into]] a closed position.

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14. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to claim 13, ~~characterized in that for controlling the rapid ventilation,~~ wherein the rapid ventilation membrane defines a control port and the milking unit cylinder further comprises: an air controller with separate control air is provided.
15. (Canceled)
16. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to claim 13, ~~14 or 15,~~ characterized in that the rapid ventilation is controlled by means of and further comprising a rapid ventilation valve in communication with the rapid communication membrane.
17. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the claims 13, to 16~~ claim 13, ~~characterized in that~~ and further comprising a biasing means is provided that biases the rapid ventilation membrane in the direction of toward the closed position.
18. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the claims 13 to 16~~ claim 13, ~~characterized in that the membrane can be displaced into a ventilation position where air can be supplied through at least one rapid ventilation aperture wherein~~ the rapid ventilation membrane defines a rapid ventilation aperture for communicating air and moving the rapid ventilation membrane to a ventilation position.
19. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the claims 13 to 18~~ claim 13, ~~characterized in that on one side of wherein the membrane an interior space of rapid ventilation membrane is disposed in the milking unit cylinder is provided in which to define an interior space; and the milking unit cylinder further comprises a piston [[is]] mounted in the interior space.~~

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20. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the claims 13 to 19~~ claim 19, ~~characterized in that on the other side of the membrane and further comprising~~ a membrane control port ~~[[is]]~~ mounted on the side of the rapid ventilation membrane that is opposite the piston.
21. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the claims 13 to 20~~ claim 20, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the rapid ventilation membrane can be placed in ~~[[the]]~~ a ventilation position by applying atmospheric pressure in the interior space and by applying subpressure to the membrane control port.
22. (Currently Amended) The milking unit cylinder according to ~~at least one of the claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that at least one and further comprising a rapid ventilation~~ ~~[[with]]~~ membrane and a rapid ventilation valve ~~is provided~~ which can be placed ~~at least into~~ move between an open position and a closed position.
23. (Canceled)
24. (Currently Amended) A method for automatically starting a milking process ~~wherein~~ comprising the steps of:
 holding a milking unit;
 ~~[[triggers]]~~ triggering a start signal; and
 ~~rapidly ventilation occurs~~ ventilating a milking unit cylinder.
25. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 24 ~~wherein~~ and further comprising the step of lifting a milking unit to trigger~~[[s]]~~ a start signal.

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26. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 24 ~~[[or 25]]~~ wherein the step of:
rapidly ~~ventilation occurs through additional~~ ventilating the milking unit cylinder
comprises the step of:
ventilating gas through a plurality of ventilation apertures.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Canceled)